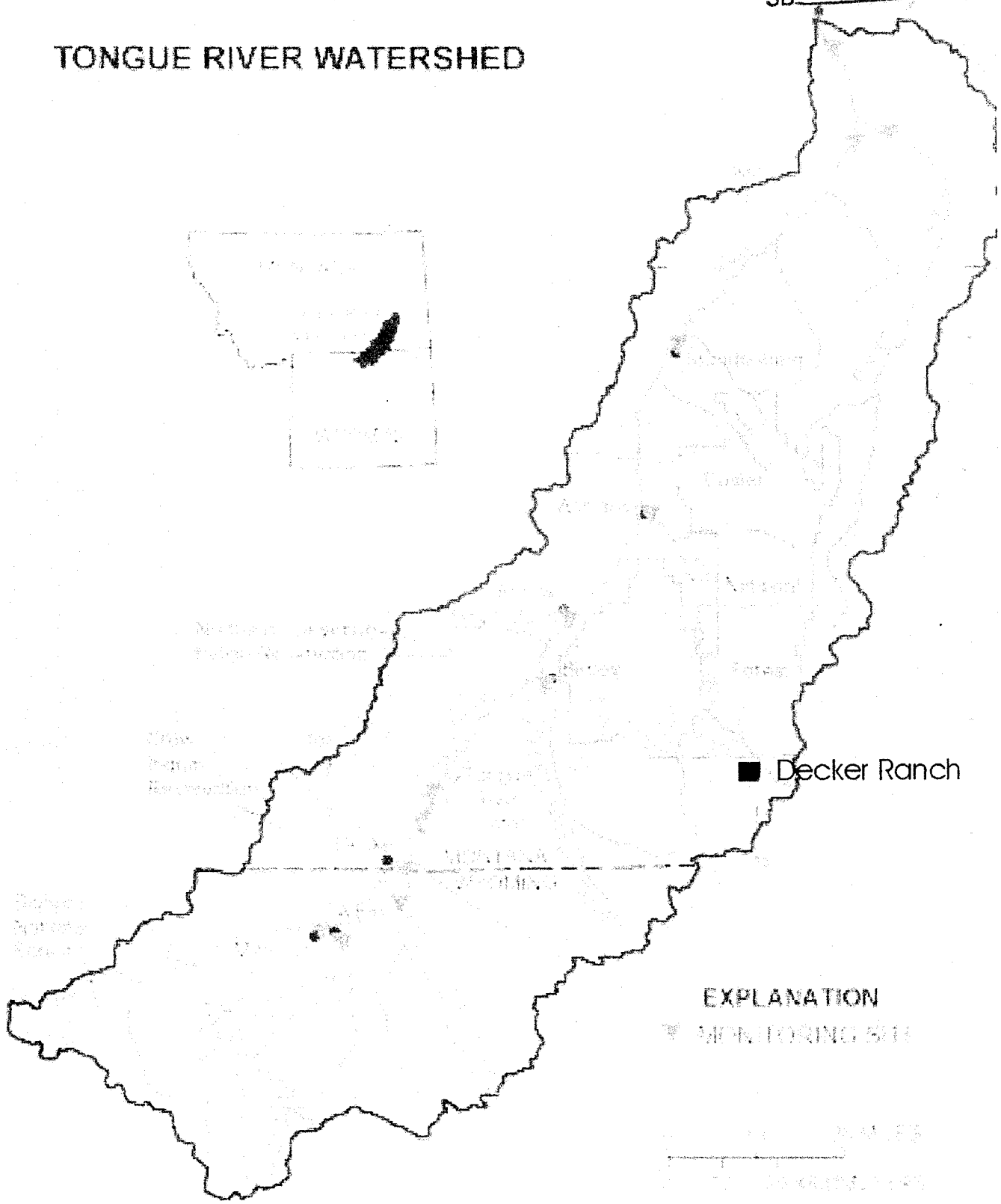
EXHIBIT 54
DATE 4-2-07
SB 407

TONGUE RIVER WATERSHED



Reference: http:://tonguerivermonitoring.cr.usgs.gov/ , with ranch location added

Document prepared by: Gordon Decker, 6700 Springhill Road, Belgrade, MT 59714
Telephone (406) 586-3428· April 2, 2007

Montana SAR irrigation-season monthly mean standard of 3.0 in 2004, whereas, all monthly means exceeded the standard at both Hanging Woman and Otter Creeks.

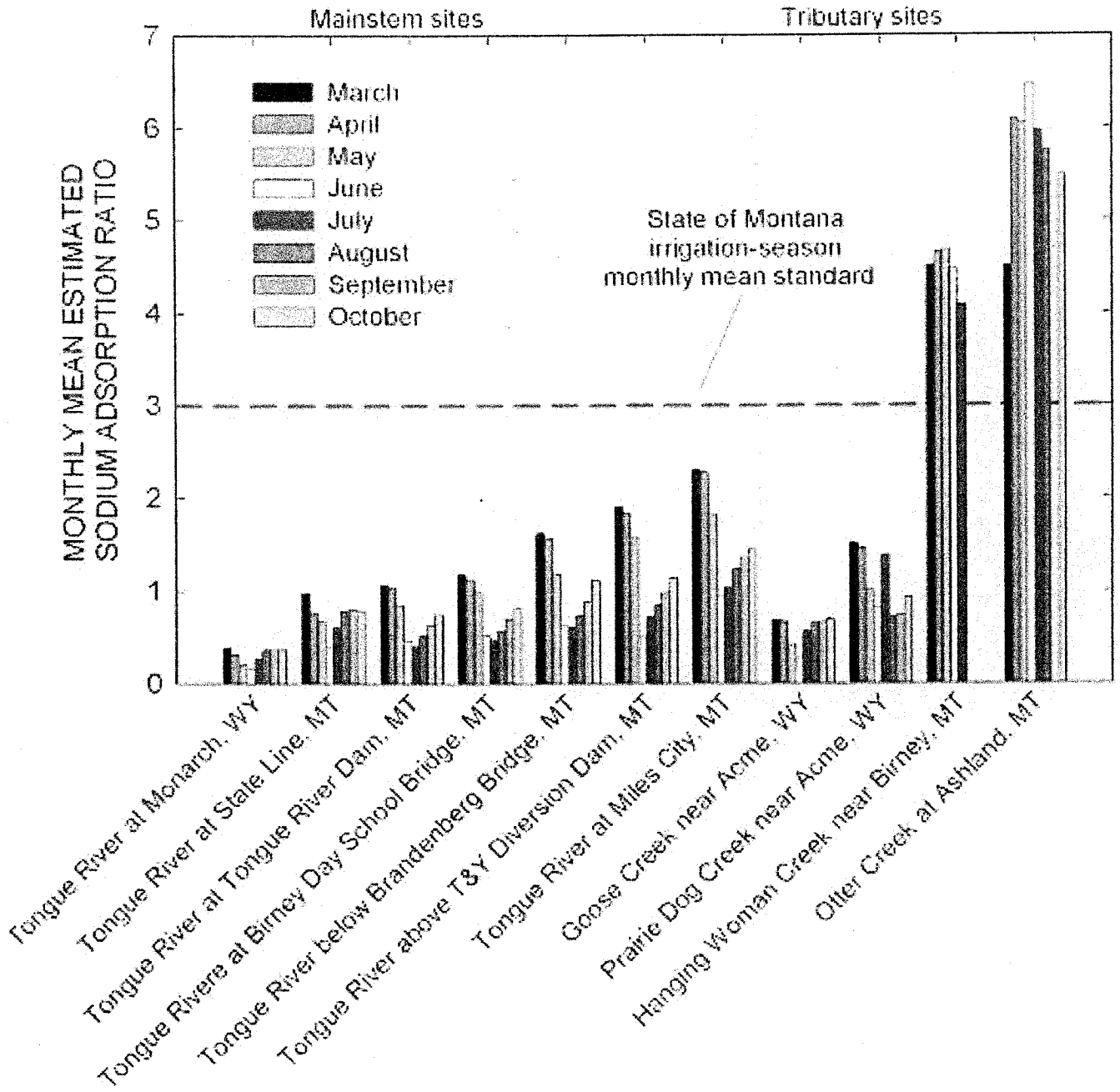
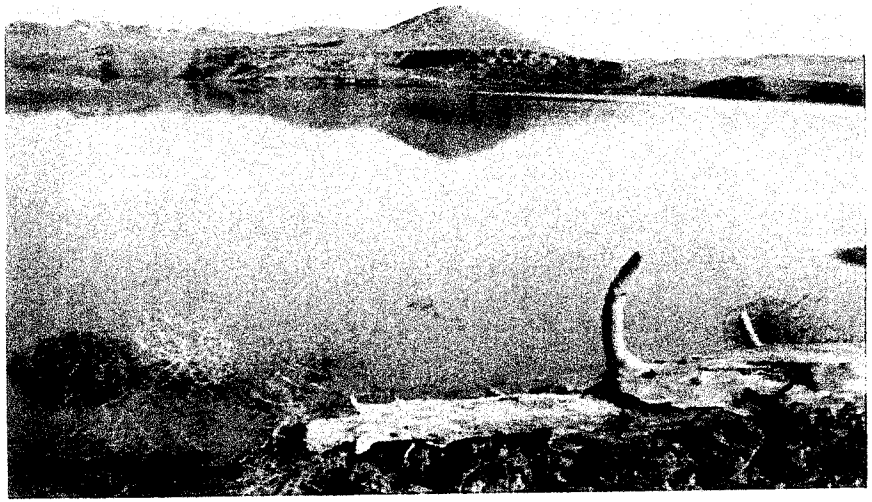
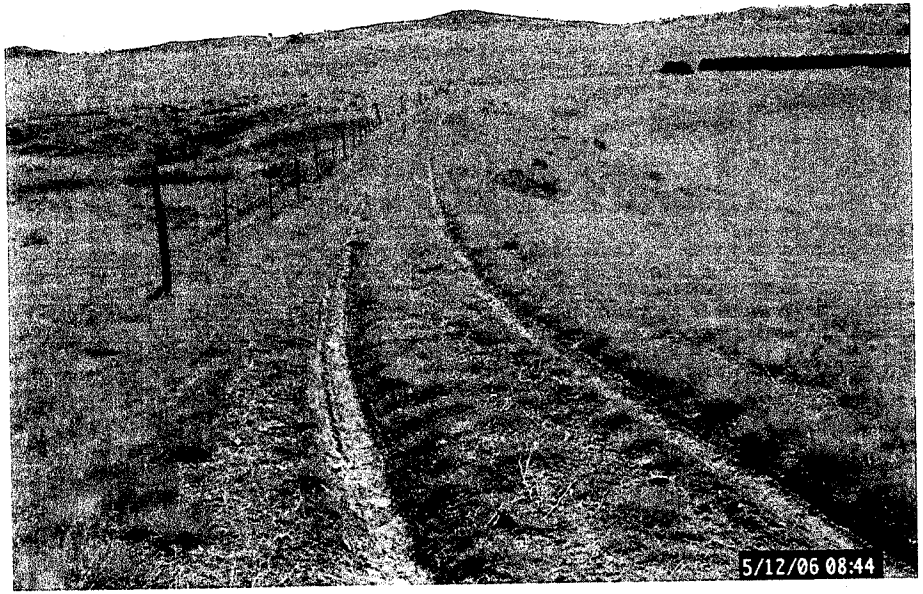


Figure 12. Monthly mean estimated sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) for Tongue River mainstem and tributary sites, Montana and Wyoming, during March-October 2005. Values are not shown for months for which fewer than nine daily mean values were available. The State of Montana irrigation-season SAR monthly mean standard (Montana Department of Environmental Quality, 2003) is included on the graph for reference

WR-42C 24550-00: Capacity=38 AcFt: Full in Early 1950's

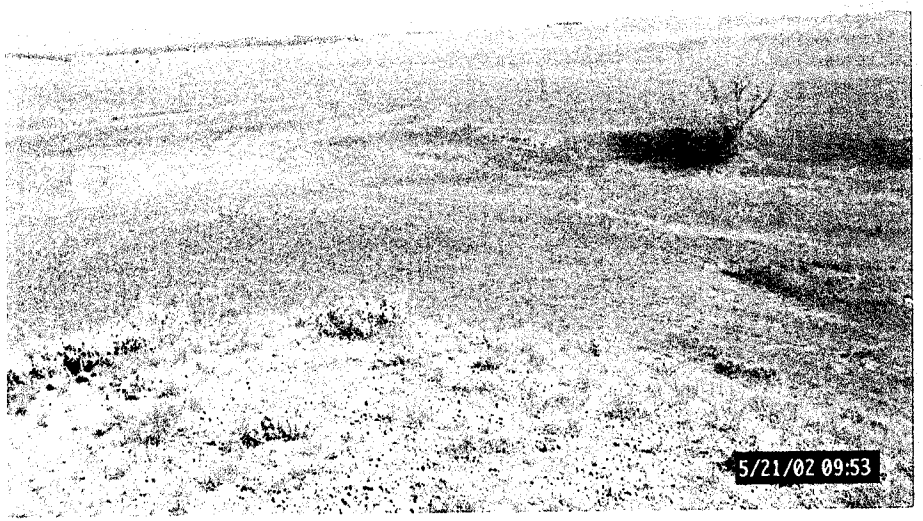


WR-42C 24556-00: Capacity=19.6 AcFt: Early 1950's

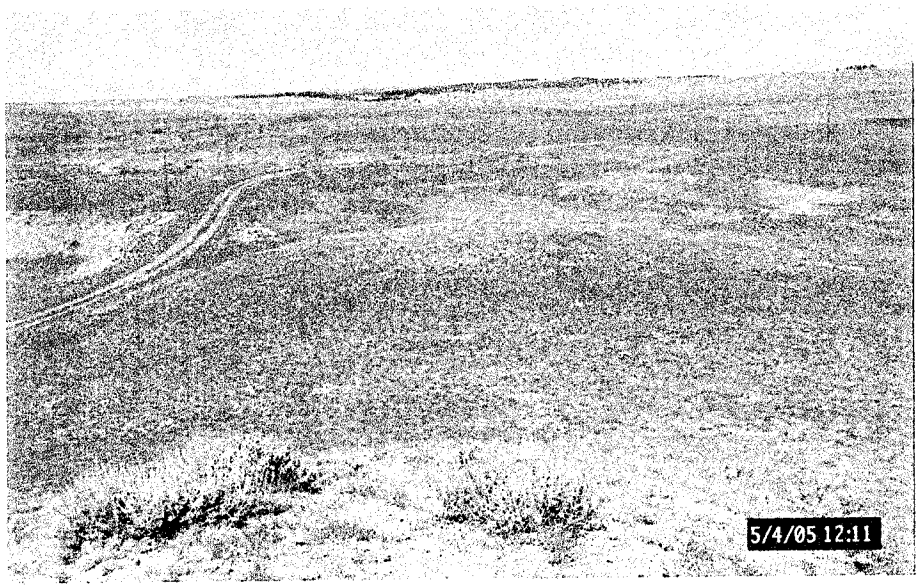


WR-42C 24550-00: (Irrig Dam) Dry on May 12, 2006

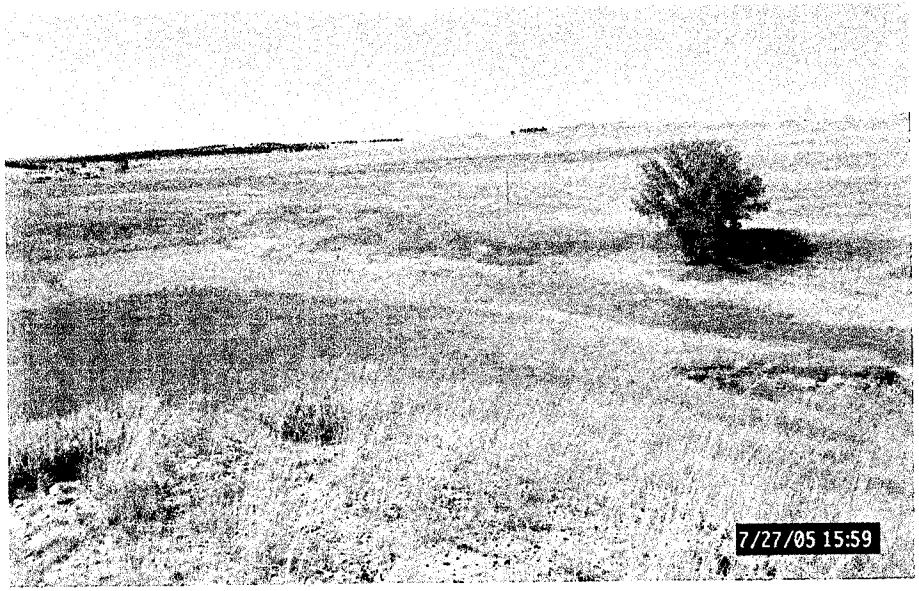
WR-42C 24556-00: Dry on June 11, 2001



WR-42C 24556-00: Dry on May 21, 2002

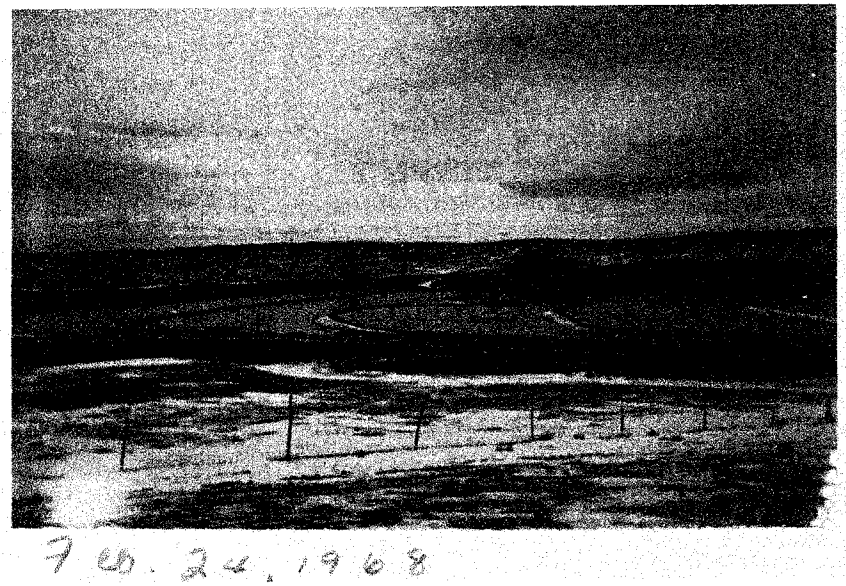


WR-42C 24556-00: Dry on June 4, 2005

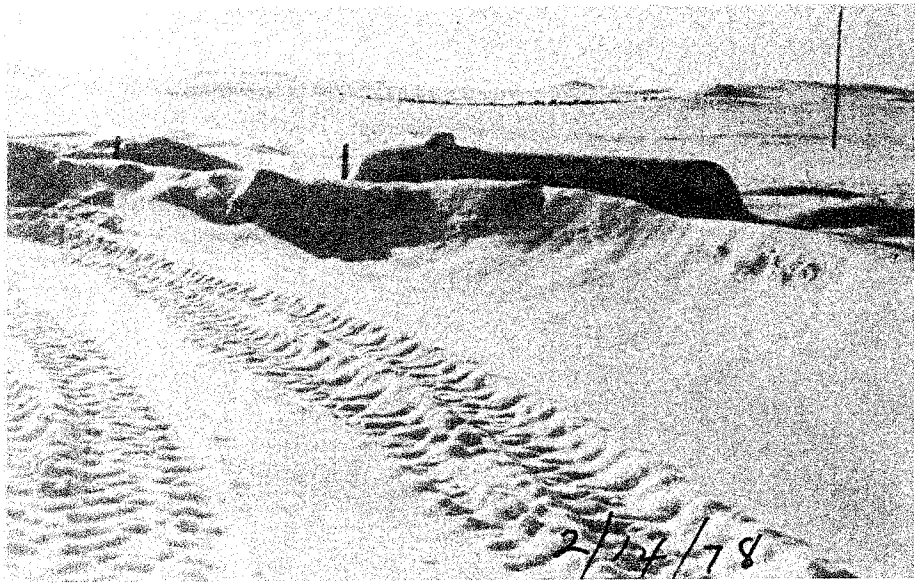


WR-42C 24556-00: Runoff on about 7/27/2005

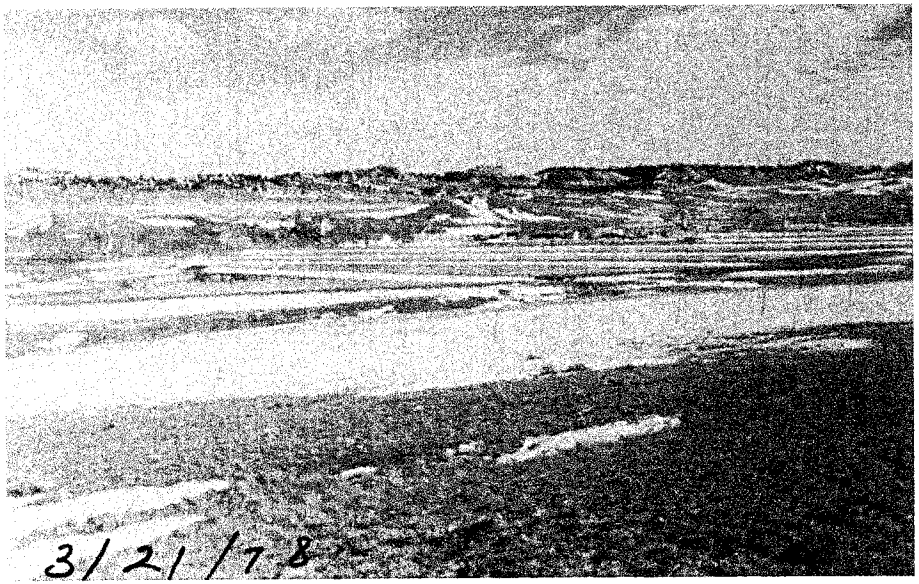
WR-42C 24556-00: Dry 2006 but Veg reflects the 7/05 runoff



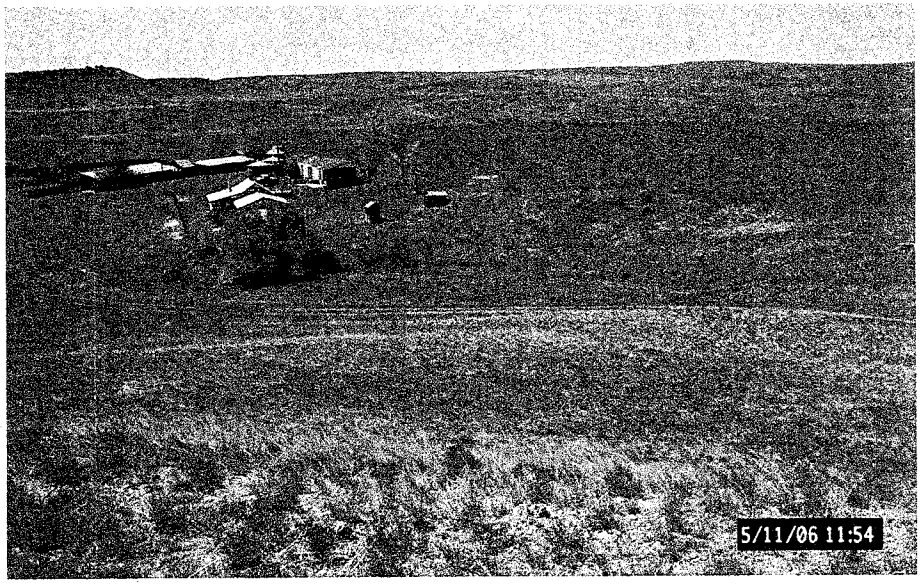
Dykes full at Ranch Headquarters on 2/24/1968



Snow cover at Ranch Headquarters on 2/14/1978



Dykes on 3/21/1978; Otter Cr. cfs increased & SAR decreased



Dykes at Ranch HQ on 5/11/2006, typical since 1978

Testimony Summary, April 2, 2007

History

- My Sister and I own the family ranch in Powder River County.
- Homesteaded by our grandparents in about 1910.
- The ranch is 45 miles SE of Ashland (Tongue River) on a tributary of Otter Creek.
- There is no Coal Bed Methane (CBM) development in our area.
- **Wells** at the ranch headquarters have gone from 15 feet in 1910 thru the 1950's,
  - to 50 feet from the 1950's to 2003,
  - to 180 feet @ 4 gal/min in a coal seam (CBM water ??) from 2003 to present.
- **Springs** originally provided water in our creeks from before 1910 into the 1960's.
- We had to develop these springs as wells in the 1980's to feed pipelines and stock tanks.
- Spring water analysis in 1984: Total dissolved solids = 6541.24 ppm, SAR = 8.18, and field conductivity = 6700 umhos. (Analysis source: http://mbmggwic.mtech.edu/).
- This is the quality of water that our livestock and wildlife were drinking.
- This shallow spring/well went dry in 2003.

Current situation

- All of our shallow **wells and springs have gone dry** and are not CBM related.
- Our **10 reservoirs have been dry** for 8 of the last 10 years. (snow runoff this spring)
- Ranchers in our area are hauling water or pumping well water into pipelines and tanks.
- We currently have about 10 miles of pipeline delivering water to 15 stock water tanks.
- We also use storage tanks that fill at night, in order to assure adequate water at tanks.

Needs

- We have a desperate need for additional water for livestock and wildlife.
- We would like the opportunity to develop a **water management plan**:
  - that would allow us to utilize CBM water in our existing reservoirs,
  - that would not release CBM water into state waterways.

I, therefore, strongly support Senate Bill No. 407 that will authorize discharge of CBM water into existing reservoirs/impoundments for livestock and wildlife.

Thank you,

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